

1. (Currently amended) A method of managing inventory comprising the steps of:

wirelessly receiving first identification information from first product labels affixed to first instances of a product by an electronic price label adjacent the first instances, wherein the first instances of the product include second instances of the product to be removed for purchase by customers and third instances to be left adjacent the electronic price label, wherein the first product labels include second product labels affixed to the second instances of the product and the third product labels affixed to the third instances of the product;

determining a first amount of the product from the first identification information;

wirelessly receiving second identification information from the second product labels affixed to the second instances of the product during sale of the second instances of the product by a checkout station;

determining a second amount of the product from the second identification information;

wirelessly receiving third identification information from the third product labels affixed to the ~~remaining~~ third instances of the product by the electronic price label; and

determining a third amount of the product adjacent the electronic price label from the third identification information representing a current inventory amount of the product.

2. (Previously presented) The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

determining a difference amount between the first and third amounts; and

comparing the difference amount to the second amount to determine a fourth amount of the product including fourth instances of the first instances of the product which were removed from the electronic price label but not purchased.

3. (Currently amended) The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

wirelessly receiving fourth identification information from fourth product labels affixed to fourth instances of a the product, not included in the first instances of the product, which are returned by customers;

determining a fourth amount of the product from the fourth identification information; and

adding the fourth amount to the third amount to obtain a new current inventory amount of the product.

4. (original) The method as recited in claim 1, further comprising the step of:

determining from the third amount whether to order additional instances of the product.

5. (Currently amended) An inventory management system comprising:

an electronic price label system including electronic displays which display price information, and interrogators which wirelessly obtain identification information from product labels;

wherein the electronic displays include control circuitry for controlling display of price information, for controlling interrogation of the product labels by the interrogators, and for sending the identification information through the electronic price label system; and

a computer which receives first identification information from first product labels affixed to first instances of a product from the control circuitry of an associated electronic display adjacent the first instances, wherein the first instances of the product include second instances of the product to be removed for purchase by customers and third instances to be left adjacent the associated electronic display, wherein the first product labels include second product labels affixed to the second instances of the product and the third product labels affixed to the third instances of the product, and wherein the computer additionally determines a first amount of the product from the first identification information, receives second identification information from the second product labels affixed to the second instances of the product during sale of the second instances,

determines a second amount of the product from the second identification information, receives third identification information from the third product labels affixed to the ~~remaining~~ third instances of the product from the control circuitry of the associated electronic display, and determines a third amount of the product adjacent the associated electronic display from the third identification information representing a current inventory amount of the product.

6. (Previously presented) The system as recited in claim 5, wherein the computer additionally determines a difference amount between the first and third amounts, and compares the difference amount to the second amount to determine a fourth amount of the product including fourth instances of the first instances of the product which were removed from the electronic display but not purchased.

7. (Currently amended) The system as recited in claim 5, wherein the computer additionally receives fourth identification information from fourth product labels affixed to fourth instances of ~~a~~ the product, not included in the first instances of the product, which are returned, determines a fourth amount of the product from the fourth identification information, and adds the fourth amount to the third amount to obtain a new current inventory amount of the product.

8. (original) The system as recited in claim 5, wherein the computer additionally determines from the third amount whether to order additional instances of the product.

9. (Currently amended) A method of managing inventory comprising the steps of:

wirelessly receiving first identification information from first product labels affixed to first instances of a product by a product label interrogator in an electronic price label adjacent the first instances, wherein the first instances of the product include second instances of the product to be removed for purchase by customers and third instances to be left adjacent the electronic price label, and wherein the first product labels include second product labels affixed to the second instances of the product and the third product labels affixed to the third instances of the product;

sending a message containing the first identification information to an electronic price label system computer by the electronic price label;

sending the first identification information to an inventory management computer by the electronic price label system computer;

determining a first amount of the product from the first identification information by the inventory management computer;

wirelessly receiving second identification information from the second product labels affixed to the second instances of the product during sale of the second instances of the product by a point-of-sale computer;

sending the second identification information to the inventory management computer by the point-of-sale computer;

determining a second amount of the product from the second identification information by the inventory management computer;

wirelessly receiving third identification information from the third product labels affixed to the ~~remaining~~ third instances of the product by the electronic price label;

sending another message containing the third identification information to the electronic price label system computer by the electronic price label;

sending the third identification information to the inventory management computer by the electronic price label system computer; and

determining a third amount of the product adjacent the electronic price label from the third identification information representing a current inventory amount of the product by the inventory management computer.

10. (Previously presented) The method as recited in claim 9, further comprising the steps of:

determining a difference amount between the first and third amounts by the inventory management computer; and

comparing the difference amount to the second amount by the inventory management computer to determine a fourth amount of the product including fourth instances of the first instances of the product which were removed from the electronic price label but not purchased.

11. (Currently amended) The method as recited in claim 9, further comprising the steps of:

wirelessly receiving fourth identification information from fourth product labels affixed to fourth instances of a the product, not included in the first instances of the product, which are returned by customers by a customer service computer;

sending the fourth identification information to the inventory management computer by the customer service computer;

determining a fourth amount of the product from the fourth identification information by the inventory management computer; and

adding the fourth amount to the third amount to obtain a new current inventory amount of the product by the inventory management computer.

12. (Previously presented) The method as recited in claim 9, further comprising the step of:

determining from the third amount whether to order additional instances of the product by the inventory management computer.

13. (Currently amended) A method of managing inventory comprising the steps of:

receiving first identification information stored in first product labels affixed to first instances of a product from a first product label interrogator by control circuitry in an electronic price label adjacent the first instances, wherein the first instances of the product include second instances of the product to be removed for purchase by customers and third instances to be left adjacent the electronic price label, and wherein the first product labels include second product labels affixed to the second instances of the product and the third product labels affixed to the third instances of the product;

sending a message containing the first identification information to an electronic price label system computer by the control circuitry;

sending the first identification information to an inventory management computer by the electronic price label system computer;

determining a first amount of the product from the first identification information by the inventory management computer;



receiving second identification information stored in the second product labels affixed to the second instances of the product from a second product label interrogator by a point-of-sale computer that processed sale of the second instances;

sending the second identification information to the inventory management computer by the point-of-sale computer;

determining a second amount of the product from the second identification information by the inventory management computer;

receiving third identification information from the third product labels affixed to the ~~remaining~~ third instances of the product from the first product label interrogator by the control circuitry in the electronic price label adjacent the third instances;

sending another message containing the third identification information to the electronic price label system computer by the electronic price label;

sending the third identification information to the inventory management computer by the electronic price label system computer; and

determining a third amount of the product adjacent the electronic price label from the third identification information representing a current inventory amount of the product by the inventory management computer.

14. (Currently amended) An inventory management system comprising:

an electronic price label system including electronic displays for displaying price information, product label interrogators in the electronic displays for wirelessly receiving identification information from product labels, and control circuitry in the electronic displays for controlling display of price information, for controlling reception of the identification information from the product labels by the interrogators, and for wirelessly sending the identification information through the electronic price label system; and

a computer for receiving first identification information from first product labels affixed to first instances of a product from the control circuitry of an associated electronic display adjacent the first instances, wherein the first instances of the product include second instances of the product to be removed for purchase by customers and third instances to be left adjacent the associated electronic display, and wherein the first product labels include second product labels affixed to the second instances of the product and the third product labels affixed to the third instances of the product, and wherein the computer additionally determines a first amount of the product from the first identification information, receives second identification information from the second product labels affixed to the second instances of the product which have been sold, determines a

second amount of the product from the second identification information, receives third identification information from the third product labels affixed to the ~~remaining~~ third instances of the product from the control circuitry of the associated electronic display, and determines a third amount of the product adjacent the associated electronic display from the third identification information representing a current inventory amount of the product.